

Motion: The Committee on Homelessness, after discussion with the Town's Community Development Director, at its meeting of May 15, 2009 now supports the existing proposal for handling the so-called Waxman money. The Committee will continue to discuss the distribution targeted for the homeless, and may soon bring a proposal forward for the application and dispersal procedure for the homeless population.

## **Emergency Assistance Fund: Modified Proposal**

Recently Amherst was awarded \$115,000 from a settlement of an old Housing Review Board case that previously was to be returned to the state as unclaimed funds. The new ruling permits the Town to use these funds for emergency fuel and emergency housing assistance. Funds will be dispersed based on the following guidelines:

1. Funds will be available to low- and moderate-income households or individuals for emergency rental assistance, emergency fuel assistance, or emergency shelter. Households and individuals will be required to provide documentation that confirms their household income meets the state definition of low income. Homeless individuals do not need to provide income documentation.
2. Documentation for emergency rental assistance or emergency fuel assistance will require households or individuals to submit either a shut off notice from a fuel company or a notice to quit from a landlord. Referrals for homeless individuals will require a recommendation from a homelessness outreach worker and an invoice from the hotel/motel that provided the emergency shelter.
3. Funding will be provided as a last resort with the assurance that these funds will stabilize a household's situation, for example that a household or individual will not be evicted.
4. Each household would be eligible for a maximum of \$300.00.
5. Family Outreach of Amherst will be responsible for screening households that will include collecting client information, documenting need and household income and will provide case management and or case coordination for each client as appropriate. This will ensure that families will receive additional services as necessary and prevent this family from facing similar crisis.
6. The homelessness outreach worker(s) will be responsible for screening individuals who are currently homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and follow the same procedure as described in 3.
7. In some cases an individual or household can receive up to \$300.00 to pay first month, last month and security deposit if there is evidence that the tenant can continue to pay rent and that further the individual or household is either currently homeless or is in eminent danger of becoming homeless.
8. Homeless individuals in need of emergency shelter may be eligible for additional support depending on circumstances.

Funds will be used over a three year period as follows:

Family Outreach of Amherst Case Mgt/Coordination for families	\$13,000 per yr.
Direct Emergency Assistance for homelessness prevention	\$10,000 per yr.
Direct Emergency Assistance for homeless individuals	\$15,000 per yr.

